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## UP A DUTCH CANAL.

'HOLLAND is severely characteristic.' This is what I think, as our steamer gently glides into one of the longest of her numerous canals on our way to Rotterdam. In almost every continental town, you are occasionally reminded of something you have seen before. In St Petersburg you are met at every turn by old friends amid new surroundings; there is a bit of Paris, Germany, or Italy, in the build of that mansion, palace, or church; and in the lively gesticulations and affable bearing of the polished Russian, you recognise a not unfaithful representation of our neighbour on the other side of the Channel. In Copenhagen you can scarcely realise that you are in Denmark, and not in some quaint old German town; there are the narrow streets, the high red-tiled houses with pointed gables, and the solemn, undemonstrative men and women with German phlegm in face and gait. In Berlin, though you feel that this is indeed Germany, you are not struck with any pronounced feature which marks it a German town and none other; 'Unter den Linden' you meet many Jews, who gabble an execrable jargon as they pass you; and there is no national costume to strike the eye.

But in Holland, everything is essentially Dutch. The very air which plays upon my cheek this bright spring morning, blows nowhere but in Holland; it is laden with a strange, warm moisture, and the all-pervading perfume of grass. And what grass! It is of the deepest, softest emerald, a green which affords delightful rest to the eye. For some time there is little else to look upon save field upon field of billowy grass, in which graze numbers of sleek-dappled cows, looking so unnaturally bright against the vivid green, that I am forcibly reminded of an ancient toy-box which used to exist in the nursery at home, in which the cows were all dappled and of startling hues. The fields are divided by high dikes, along which the dry level roads are made; and ever and anon, a high two-wheeled gig, drawn

by a lean long-legged horse, spins past against the bright blue background of the sky. The landscape is dotted with innumerable and ever-moving windmills—from one point of view I count twenty-three—by means of which the water is drained from the meadow-land, and transmitted into the deep ditches which flow continuously into the canal.

As we turn a bend in the canal, a little low-roofed Dutch farm comes into view, and I am again reminded of the contents of that miraculous toy-box. There is the little square white house with its brick-red roof; the stiff squat trees, cut into shapes, the very trunks modelled after the same pattern; the flock of dazzling white geese with the same blamelessly clean red legs; the horse, leaning its wooden neck over a lavishly painted gate; and the same squat little woman with short petticoats, and square-shouldered man with the supernaturally black high-crowned hat. 'So,' I think with a smile, 'this is where the benevolent artist borrowed that grand idea which has awakened rapture in the hearts of generations of children.' But I am so engrossed with my discovery, that I had almost let the tiny church slip past me on the other side, though a bell is tinkling in the belfry, it being Sunday. There is no nonsense about it; a plain, whitewashed edifice, with steeple and weather-cock, standing boldly on its reclaimed plateau. No useless ornamental buttress; no trees or flowers in the little graveyard which surrounds it. A church and nothing else; spotlessly clean, painfully plain, and eminently Dutch.

The Lutheran pastor who wends his way along the up-raised road, might be mistaken for an English High-church clergyman, in his long black coat, broad-brimmed felt hat, and plain white bands. The women look extremely neat; they wear pretty white caps, with long curtains flowing over their shoulders; the married women, with curiously twisted gold ornaments standing out from each side of their heads, and frequently a gold plate, which fits on to the head, and shines through the clear muslin. Occasionally they have the addition of a pair of massive earrings,

which glance gaily in the sunlight. But I look in vain amongst them for a pretty face or graceful form; extreme cleanliness and a certain stolid air of good-nature being their sole charms. Their figures are ungainly; their gait rolling and awkward—the result of wooden shoes. That worthy farmer with his imperturbable square face, with its high cheek-bones and large features, looks as if he would be more comfortable in his work-day clothes and wooden shoes, than in that shining black go-to-meeting suit, with boots to match. He leads a solemn little urchin by the hand, a small miniature of himself, who looks wistfully at a group of boys and girls who sit in happy freedom on the grassy embankment which slopes down to the side-walk at the edge of the canal. The moment they see our boat, they start to their feet, and follow us in their clattering wooden shoes, as they keep up a continuous droning song.

‘They are singing for biscuits,’ the captain informs me; and soon a lively scene commences. The sailors flock to the decks, where much laughing and merriment prevail. The little sturdy Dutch legs do wonders, for we are proceeding at a fair rate, and their vigorous efforts are rewarded by an occasional ship-biscuit, which causes a general scramble, until they begin to drop off one by one, to sink down into the long grass to wipe their hot faces and munch their biscuits.

Now we are passing the tiniest toy-house, one blaze of white and red, standing in the centre of a few yards of trim garden. A small laburnum tree, weighed down with golden blossom, overhangs the porch, and heightens the vividness of colouring. A few apple-trees in full bloom, pruned within an inch of their lives—their trunks actually whitewashed!—constitute the orchard, whilst every available inch of the tiny beds in front is filled with flowers. The daintily curtained windows, too, are gay with bright geraniums. The whole is raised, from the danger of often-recurring floods, on a high and solid foundation of bricks and mortar, scaled by a flight of steps. As we glide past, the door is suddenly burst open, and a remarkable female apparition rushes down the steps with a whoop like that of a red Indian, which declines into a nasal version of the ‘biscuit-song.’ I presume she is a specimen of Dutch womanliness; but as I have never seen her like either before or since, I beg my readers not to suppose that she is a type. She is as long and lank as a Maypole, though her age cannot be more than fifteen. She has shoulders which slope away to nothing; a deficiency which, however, is more than made up by a prodigious width of body. Her costume is a full-skirted black frock; a white cotton cap, devoid of frills, which fits as if grown to her head; a pair of long black stockings, and wooden shoes. Her unexpected appearance is greeted by a spontaneous roar of laughter from

the crew, and she is instantaneously hailed as ‘Sally.’

On we go, and ‘Sally’ follows; the shrill tones of the biscuit-song rise and fall in monotonous repetition, as if proceeding from some exhaustless wind instrument, and the wooden shoes keep time. Presently she is joined by a small boy, and a race begins. The short legs keep pace with the long ones in a way that is marvellous. A biscuit is thrown. They both fall upon it, and for some moments of suspense four wooden shoes wave wildly in the air. The small boy comes to light again looking flattened and tumbled; his countenance is immovable; but his rival is disclosing a large cotton pocket, which had hitherto been concealed beneath the ample folds of her skirt, and in it she deposits the biscuit. This tableau is repeated at intervals amidst the cheers of the sailors, for a period of time which does honour to Dutch perseverance, and the indefatigable ‘Sally’ is the last to give in.

As the sun begins to slope westward, I marvel at the manifold notes of the birds. I recognise the familiar tones of many an English field-songster. Larks fill the air with their rapturous melody; rows of swallows twit ceaselessly as they balance themselves on the telegraph wires which run alongside the canal; and corn-crakes answer each other from neighbouring fields. Occasionally, a pair of red-legged storks strut solemnly about the low marsh-land, or stop to bolt a struggling frog.

The sunset this evening, if portrayed on canvas, would be pronounced exaggerated; nor can my pen succeed in describing the marvellous scene. Above the horizon hangs a filmy cloud of mist, which gradually assumes the most exquisite tints of purple, pink, and gold. There is a clear watery light resting on the peaceful landscape, which deepens as the sun drops silently behind the distant meadows, until every object seems to stand out as if illuminated by Bengal-fire. Gradually the light dies down into a lurid red, and the white mist curls up from the humid earth. In a short time my jacket is drenched, and I am glad to descend to the cabin. My berth, to which I shortly retire, proves a miserable deception as a place of repose; for though the feathered minnesingers have long since sunk to silence, another music has commenced, which renders night hideous. Millions of frogs keep up their incessant ‘Croak! Croak!’ The noise is deafening, and diminishes not until the dawn is trembling in the sky. I hurry on my clothes before sunrise, and go on deck; and here I learn to thank my enemies the frogs for having driven me from my uncomfortable couch to the enjoyment of a picture which will never fade from my memory. We are lying at the gates of a sluice, and in a perfect grove of fragrant fruit-trees, through the blossoming boughs of which peep the bright red roofs of a picturesque village. As the sun mounts higher on the horizon, the heavy

dewdrops which hang from every leaf and blade of grass flash back showers of glittering rays, which quiver and vary their glorious hues ere they fall like pattering raindrops on the ground. On the quay stands a meek-faced black goat with her family of three, all as dusky as herself.

But the dew which is turning all nature into a fairy scene, is wetting me to the skin, and I am obliged to go below, and take possession of a thick woollen rug in which to envelop myself. As the morning advances, signs of life begin to appear. The door of a cottage is opened, and a woman, in the usual short petticoats and wooden shoes, issues forth with a bucket, and a long pole furnished at the end with a hook. She hangs her bucket on the hook, and dips it into the canal. Then a splashing and mopping begins; bucket after bucket of water is lifted and dashed against the front of the house. Other doors are opened, and the same conduct—to me inexplicable—is pursued, until the whole place is in a swim. When at length the cleansing process has been accomplished to Dutch satisfaction, a plank having been placed from our boat to the quay, the women begin to flock on board with their baskets of eggs and butter, which the steward tells me are very dear. 'The Dutch,' he says, 'know how to drive a bargain.'

Many of them speak a few sentences of English; and I am impelled to buy some suspiciously green-looking oranges, at an exorbitant price, from an enterprising saleswoman because she accosts me with: 'Will you buy, my ledly? Sheap! sheap!'

It is nearly mid-day before we get through those sluice-gates and drop down towards Rotterdam. We pass other canals, which stretch away from us into the country. There are many of them so narrow that only small craft can ply upon them. The windmills multiply and then suddenly cease, for we are now in a region where they are unavailing; the land lies much below the level of the sea, and is irreclaimable. Most desolate, even in the bright mid-day sun, is the appearance of the shores. We are no longer in a canal, but in a wide sweep of dark turbid water, fringed by a wilderness of sedges and osiers. Flocks of teal and brent rise with harsh discordant cry; whilst water-hens bob in and out amongst the twisted roots of the willows. In the background rises the bare straight high-road against the horizon. Here and there a tiny cottage stands on its platform of brick; at the foot of a flight of steps, a boat lies moored; the only means of exit and egress being by water. The occupation of these lonely dwellers of the marsh is osier-cutting. The osiers are split and made into hoops, an extensive traffic being carried on between Holland and other countries in this commodity.

Soon we begin to pass numerous vessels; the water widens, and a forest of masts rises in the distance, and there is Rotterdam. Very quaint and picturesque looks the ancient city with its curious gabled houses, over whose roofs the spires of more than one old church appear. The broad quay is planted with magnificent lime-trees, which also rear their leafy branches over the side-walks of the many canals which intersect the town like a network, where busy craft pass

up and down. But when the noise and bustle of the day are stilled, and I sit on deck and watch the great round moon lift her yellow face above the tall ships' masts, and softly throw her magic mantle over the scene, I think that Holland, with its ever-present waters, is a land of beauty and wonder.

## VALENTINE STRANGE.

A STORY OF THE PRIMROSE WAY.

### CHAPTER XXVII.—LIKE A GHOST REVISITING OLD HAUNTS.

WALKING slowly to his hotel through streets which had a half-awakened air about them, as if they, like himself, had been turning night into day, Mr Lumby was conscious of a singular sensation. It was as if an elastic cord alternately tightened and relaxed itself within his head. The tightening was terrible; the relaxation brought with it a very remarkable feeling of looseness in the brain, as though it had lost its boundaries. These curious symptoms recurred slowly at first; but after a little time the cord began to tighten and relax itself at an astonishing pace, and this, before he had gone far, resulted in a splitting headache and a general sense of stupefaction. 'I have been over-excited,' said the merchant to himself as he passed his hand across his forehead, and stood for a moment bareheaded in the chill morning air. 'Now I come to think of it, I have been terribly excited. Yes; it has been an exciting time, quite an exciting time. We have had a near shave, Gerard, a near shave.' Rousing himself to a knowledge of the fact that he was standing uncovered in the street, and seeing that a shop-boy had paused in the act of taking down shutters to stare at him, he resumed his hat and walked on. He seemed to take the matter very calmly now, he thought. A minute later last night, and Garling might have been triumphant after all. 'Yes,' he repeated vaguely, 'it was a near shave.' The tightening and relaxing cord in his head seemed in some inexplicable way to have got hold of that phrase—'a near shave'—with a tug of dreadful pain—'a near shave' with a sense of dreadful laxness and a loss of the brain's boundaries, as though it were altogether unfenced, and flowed out loose until the tug came and drew it together again with—'a near shave' for watchword. He was dimly conscious that this physical condition involved a mental condition which was as unusual as itself. The pain in his head was becoming unbearable by the time he reached the hotel. Boots, again amazed by his appearance at this abnormal hour, asked if he could do anything for him.

'A near shave,' said the merchant vaguely.

'Shave, sir?' said the Boots. 'Send for barber, sir, d'rec'ly, sir.'

'No; never mind that,' said Mr Lumby, awakening as if from a dream of fog with a horrible headache and one persistent phrase in it. 'Bring me a cup of tea—strong tea—unusually strong tea.'

'Yes, sir,' said the Boots; 'd'rec'ly, sir.' That was Boots's formula.—'Looks awful ill,' he thought, looking after the merchant. 'Odd thing for an elderly cove like him to be out all night two nights running. Ain't it now? And he

never was a frisky cove neither—not when he was young.' Boots was getting elderly, and remembered Mr Lumby this many a year, and had an interest in him. He hurried off now for the tea, and was curious or interested enough—not having much upon his hands just then—to see it made and to volunteer to take it up himself. He was a sort of idealised Boots, and had two other actual Boots beneath him. His function at his present time of life consisted chiefly in telling the way to everywhere, the cab fare to everywhere, and the time of starting of all trains at all stations—an occupation purely intellectual, and making large demands on the mental resources. Mr Lumby in the eyes of Boots was as important a person as a prime-minister, if indeed a prime-minister could have come into measurable distance with him. The head of a great City house, member of parliament for his county, who might have been Lord Mayor as often as Dick Whittington if he had chosen, was necessarily a figure in that old-fashioned City hostel, where his father and grandfather were remembered as guests before him. Boots found the great man sitting on the bed, and noticed that he looked not only ill, but bewildered.

'Excuse me, sir,' said the Boots; 'you ain't like yourself at all, sir. Shall I pull your boots off, sir?' He was down upon his knees at this task at once.—'Can't ha' been a-drinking?' he thought, looking up at the venerable face above him. 'Been a-watching by a sick-bed,' he concluded charitably; 'that's more likely. That's where he's brought that troubled look from.'

'Give me the tea, if you please,' said the merchant, with a sudden awakening look. 'I have a very bad headache.—Boots!'

'Yes, sir.'

'I have business,' said the great man, rising teacup in hand, and speaking and looking a little vacantly, 'important business at—— I have business'—he was bright and clear again—'at ten o'clock. I have time for an hour's sleep. Call me in an hour, and bring me another cup of strong tea. And I will take a hot bath.' He drank the tea, and passed his hand across his eyes; then knitting his fingers, pressed both palms heavily against his forehead, and in that attitude walked twice or thrice across the room and back again. 'In an hour's time, Boots,' he added, as that functionary was about to close the door—'not later.'

Being left alone, he partly undressed, and wrapping himself in a warm dressing-gown, stretched himself on the bed, and almost instantly fell asleep. So profound was his brief slumber, that when at the end of an hour Boots returned, and, beginning to make preparations for the bath, awoke him, Lumby found it difficult to believe that he had been left to himself more than a minute. It cost him a severe effort to rise; and no sooner was he erect again, than the cord within his head began once more to tighten and relax itself, and the aching sense of stupefaction returned. But a bath, a complete change of clothing, and another cup of strong tea, made no bad substitutes for a night's sleep, and he went out refreshed to meet Garling. Looking back at the condition into which he had fallen on first entering the street, nearly two hours before, he felt some

alarm—of a retrospective sort—at the symptoms. 'It was no wonder,' he said as he walked briskly on, trying to forget his headache or to walk beyond it. 'The strain had been very terrible.' He was yet too near the edge of the precipice to dare to think much of the terrors he had escaped from. 'A little more of that,' he told himself, 'and I might have gone mad. I must be very cool and wary of excitement now.'

He reached the offices, and walked in square and upright. If he had been closely noticed, it would have been seen that his eyes were filmy, and that the flushed colour of his skin was of a different hue from that healthy redness of complexion which his face commonly wore, proof of a pure life and a good digestion. It wanted a few minutes of the hour, and there were but one or two of the clerks yet arrived. These, as the chief went squarely along, nodding here and there, noticed nothing unusual in him. Nor did any one observe any especial change in Garling when, two or three minutes later, and punctual to his hour as ever, he paced slowly in, with his hands behind him and his furtive eyes bent downwards.

Garling had not meant to be here again. He was not an imaginative man by conscious practice, but no man ever had great mental powers without the imaginative faculty being in strong force amongst them, and Garling felt like a ghost revisiting old haunts. He did not greatly care about being defeated, and he thought that curious. It was in remarkable contradiction to his sense of almost absolute indifference that when, in the course of dressing after his employer's departure, he had made preparations for shaving, he was compelled to huddle away his razors and lock them up, in a sudden terror-stricken distrust of his own will. It would be too powerful a temptation—not to *him*, for his indifference astonished him—to his hand. That, he noticed as a phenomenon hitherto unobserved, or, until now, outside his experience, and thought it would be psychologically interesting to know if suicides were ever committed in that mood and manner. Once or twice, as a matter of mere theory, and not as having much relation to himself, he wondered whether Lumby had left him any loophole of escape. He had left him two hours alone. What might have been done in two hours? To re-secure his fraudulent gains, nothing. To escape?—he had nothing to escape from. His personal liberty was guaranteed already, under certain conditions. One of them was that he should present himself at the offices at ten o'clock. He went thither automatically, with the sense of a ghostly revisiting of old scenes and resumption of old habits accompanying him and growing upon him all the way. He had been sleepless for two nights, and had a feeling of dreaming awake, and of walking in an atmosphere of nightmare, which might take shape at any moment in such forms as only the dreadful hollows of dark night can hold.

And so, almost exhausted on either side, the two combatants met again. On Garling's entrance, Mr Lumby arose and locked the door. He had waited in the room which the cashier had always used; and now resuming the seat from which Garling's coming had disturbed him, he waved



him to another on the opposite side of the table. It was the seat the regular occupant had been in the habit of offering to visitors. The cashier had an oddly-vivid feeling as he took it, of being now a stranger in the place. There was no bitterness or defeat in this: it tickled him a little, and he suppressed a smile. He was puzzled to define the humour of the situation, but it was there, none the less. Lumby, for his part, between the racking headache which had again attacked him, and the sleepy stupor which dwelt on all his faculties, had to make an effort to decide within himself for what purpose he had called Garling there. There was silence for a space of perhaps half a minute.

'One thing was omitted when we parted this morning,' said the merchant coldly, having regained the lost thread of his thoughts. 'I have your written confession here, and your statement of the funds which lie in your name at the Bank at Madrid. I want now your order for the transference of those funds to the Bank of England, to be placed there to the credit of the House.'

'The sum is a large one,' said Garling, 'and they will more easily meet the demand if it be made by instalments. Say fifty thousand now, and fifty thousand fortnightly afterwards, until the whole is withdrawn.'

'Say weekly,' said the merchant.

'Very well,' returned Garling.

'I shall require you to accompany me to the Bank, and to have inquiries wired to their agents in Madrid.'

'Very well,' said Garling again.

'Your being here this morning is a proof that you recognise the futility of any attempt to escape until your restoration is completed. Your only safety lies in obedience. My pledge will not operate a moment beyond your failure or rebellion.'

'I understand,' responded Garling.

'Prepare the necessary drafts,' said the merchant rising, 'and bring them to me. Before I leave you, surrender your keys. Be ready to accompany me to the Bank by mid-day.' Garling produced his keys, and suppressing an inclination to fling them on the table, laid them gravely down. Where was the use of a demonstration of rebellion when he was bound body and soul? Mr Lumby took them up, unlocked the drawer in which he had placed Garling's confession, withdrew that document, and placed it in the safe, the cashier watching him all the while with wicked furtiveness. Next the merchant laid a heavy hand upon the bell. 'Ask Mr Barnes to come to me,' he said to the messenger who answered to the summons. After a short pause, enter Mr Barnes, a placid but keen-looking man, with a frame of wiry white hair about a healthy-hued face, and calm gray eyes which looked through gold-rimmed spectacles. 'Mr Barnes,' said the merchant.—Mr Barnes bowed ever so slightly.—'You will take your place in this room, if you please, until you receive further instructions. Attend to these matters in the first instance'—waving a hand towards the heaped documents and letters on the table—'and take to-day the general direction of affairs. The matter need not at present be mentioned, but Mr Garling has ceased to hold any connection with the firm.'

Mr Barnes was like one thunderstruck by this

intelligence. If he had been told that Jupiter had ceased to have any connection with the planetary system, it could not have hit him harder. And in that supposititious case there would have been the refuge of unbelief to fall back upon, whilst here he was bound not to question for a moment. It was not a specified part of the merchant's undertaking with the cashier that his crime should be kept a secret, but there were many reasons which made that seem advisable. Lumby's own self-esteem went strongly in that direction, and the firm had not been accustomed to the employment of fraudulent servants. His pride in the probity of the House seemed smirched by this associate villainy, and he was not wishful to spread such a sentiment in other minds. The temporarily appointed cashier being left to his own amazement, came out of it gradually, with a general verdict of—something wrong somewhere.

'Is it your desire that I should send for the necessary forms, or myself apply for them?' asked Garling, addressing Mr Lumby, in his ordinary business tone.

'As you please,' he answered. 'But be ready to accompany me at noon.—You will open the letters and attend to general business matters, Mr Barnes.' The merchant withdrew into his own room and closed the sliding panel. 'Safe,' he thought, 'quite safe now;' and reaching with something of a blinded groping motion for a chair, he sat down and turned himself to the table. How horribly his head ached. It was well he had been able to keep a clear mind so far, and carry the situation through to this point. Thinking of what the consequences might have been, but for his seemingly accidental resolve to impeach Garling without waiting for further discoveries, he half started from his chair twice or thrice. That awful cord was tightening and loosening in his head again, and he could scarcely see for pain. An hour or two more and he would be free to rest. The excitement had been too much for him, and he would go back to the hotel and sleep it off. Sleep was all he wanted. The strain had been more than he knew of at the time, and he was not so young as he had been. Thinking thus, he sat with his arms lying heavily on the table, and with his head depending downwards heavily. More and more leaden grew the weight of pain, and at length his head drooped on his arms, and he fell asleep once more.

#### AN OLD ENGLISH BATTLEFIELD.

THE stupendous character of modern military conflicts, and the altogether different conditions under which the campaigns of these later times have been conducted, are apt to obscure the struggles which a few centuries ago helped to shape the history and destiny of our native land.

Among the classic grounds of English history, Bosworth Field claims a foremost place. There the curtain fell on a long and tragic drama, one that for some thirty years had occupied, with bitter results, the whole stage of English history. The last conflict between the rival 'Roses,' it was also the most romantic, and therefore, perhaps, the most interesting; yet, from the circumstance that

it had no contemporary historian, and that, therefore, but few authentic details are preserved of the fight, its importance is apt to be overlooked. Shakspeare's dramatic version is of course somewhat fanciful and unreliable, though it has notwithstanding an immortal place in his writings. A brief and quaint account appears in Burton's History of Leicestershire, published in 1622; and at a later period, William Hutton, the indefatigable Birmingham antiquary, spent a long time in the neighbourhood of the battlefield, and from his researches among the records and traditions of the district, compiled an elaborate account of the conflict. His history is, however, more or less inaccessible and unknown to the general public; hence it seems desirable that the most reliable descriptions of the conflict should be reproduced for the general advantage of modern readers.

Shenton Station, on the Ashby and Nuneaton line, is the most convenient halting-place for Bosworth. Crossing the railway by the foot-bridge south of the station, the elevated ground is reached, known as Ambian Hill, which not only commands an excellent view of the whole area of the battlefield, but was, in fact, the centre of its fiercest struggle. About a mile to the south-west can be seen some meadows, called the White Moors; and here the Earl of Richmond was encamped on the eve of the battle. Landing at Milford Haven on Saturday, August 6, 1485, with about two thousand followers, he had advanced through Cardigan and Welshpool to Shrewsbury, his army increasing considerably *en route*. He encamped outside Lichfield on Tuesday, August 16; and next day advanced through Tamworth to Atherstone. Two days earlier, Lord Stanley and Sir William Stanley had preceded him with their Cheshire troops, ostensibly to aid the king's cause, yet secretly sympathising with Richmond. It is said they held a private interview with the latter at Atherstone; and on the eve of the great conflict, managed to dispose of their forces so as to be able to declare for Richmond when the crisis came. The latter led his troops from Atherstone over the bridge at Wetherley, encamped on the White Moors, and constructed intrenchments, traces of which remained up to very recent years.

The king, hearing of Richmond's landing at Milford, made due preparations to meet him, and advanced to Leicester with about twelve thousand men. Leaving that town on the morning of August 17, and expecting to meet Richmond at Hinckley, he made for Elmsthorp, reaching that place in the evening, and, with his officers, spending the night in the village church. Finding he was too early for his rival, he moved a little to the north-west, and encamped on some high ground called the Bradshaws, close to Sutton, and about a mile due west from our stand-point. About two miles to the south, the tall spire of Stoke-Golding Church is seen; and on the left, a little nearer, the quaint church and village of Dadlington. Half a mile beyond the latter, and about a mile east of Stoke, was Lord Stanley's camp, bounded by a small stream called the Tweed. His lordship had posted his men ostensibly to protect the king's left flank, but in reality to attack it if circumstances should

be favourable. The Duke of Norfolk with four thousand troops encamped on the slopes of the hill north of Sutton; and Sir W. Stanley supported his right with about three thousand more. Such were the positions of the contending forces on the eve of the fight.

Hearing of Richmond's movements, the king had moved his forces on the 21st to some ground called Dicken's Nook, behind Sutton Hall to the west, addressed his troops as to the expected conflict on the morrow, and there pitched his tents. At four o'clock on the morning of the 22d, Richard was astir, and advanced his men in the direction of his antagonist. The archers formed the front line, commanded by the Duke of Norfolk; and following these, came the king with a compact body of men, flanked on each side by cavalry under the Earl of Northumberland and Sir Robert Brakenbury. These troops covered the northern and eastern sides of Ambian Hill, and there awaited the expected attack.

At ten o'clock, Richmond with his seven thousand men crossed the Tweed and the morasses that bordered it, and advanced towards the southern side of the hill. A body of Norman archers led the way, commanded by the Earl of Oxford. Sir Gilbert Talbot held the right wing, and Sir John Savage the left; while Richmond, clad in armour, commanded the centre. And then the fight commenced. 'Lord!' says Graftbury, 'how hastily the soldiers buckled their helms! how quickly the archers bent their bows and flushed their feathers! how readily the billmen shook their bills, and proved their staves, ready to approach and join when the terrible trumpet should sound the bloody blast to victory or death!' Then we are told: 'The trumpet blew, and the soldiers shouted, and the king's archers courageously let fly their arrows. The Earl's bowmen stood not still, but paid them home again, and the terrible shot once passed, the armies joined and came to hand-strokes.'

For an hour the battle raged furiously round this hill, between the men under the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Oxford, the two leaders even engaging in hand-to-hand combat. But a stray arrow killed the Duke, whose son, the Earl of Surrey, with others, made a desperate effort to avenge his death, but in vain. Then Richard ordered Northumberland to advance; but his troops wavered; and at that moment, Lord Stanley came up with his men, and joined Richmond—an ominous movement, the gravity of which Richard was not slow to understand. The crisis was becoming desperate, and needed desperate measures; hence, hearing that Richmond with his body-guard was posted on the other side of the hill, the king determined on a supreme effort—nothing short of an encounter with his rival in person, shouting in a tone of despair: 'If no one will go with me, I will go alone.' Some had urged safety in flight; and according to one account, a fleet horse was brought, with which the king, then in great peril, might have secured his life; but instead of desiring to escape, as Shakspeare represents, he indignantly rejected the proposal. Putting spurs to his own charger, he made a rush at Richmond, followed by his body-guard, including Lord Ferrers, Lord Lovell, Sir Robert Brakenbury, and Sir Richard Ratcliffe. The

fight was short and desperate. With one exception, the king's companions were all cut down, several of Richmond's sharing the same fate; and then the two rivals were about to fight single-handed, when Stanley's men coming up at that critical moment, created a diversion, and the king was immediately surrounded, his horse was entangled in a bog, and as his enemies closed in, he was speedily slain.

With the king's death, the battle at once collapsed. Sir Robert Brakenbury's troops made a feeble stand, but soon wavered; the centre did likewise, and fell back. Outflanked, however, by Stanley's troops, they failed to reach their tents, and fled across Radmoor Plain towards Dadlington, fighting as they went, and there the pursuit seems to have ended.

On Crown Hill, an eminence which adjoins the present Stoke Station, the king's crown, discovered hidden in a thorn-bush close by, was placed on the head of Richmond by Lord Stanley amid shouts of 'Long live Henry VII.!' Richard's body was dragged from the heap of slain, tied across a horse, and conveyed to Leicester, where it was exposed to view in the town-hall, and then buried in the church of St Mary, in the Greyfriars.

Thus perished the last of the Plantagenets. His character had been darkened by cruel murder, and few of his subjects cared to risk their lives in the defence of one so unfit to retain the throne. The result of the fight at Bosworth was therefore, all things considered, generally welcome to the England of that period.

The site of the battle has of course undergone considerable transformation in later times. A canal and railway now intersect its area; the swampy ground has been drained, and a wood occupies what was once a morass, the nature of which had something to do with the dispositions, and perhaps also the result of the conflict. Within living memory, many relics of the fight have been discovered during draining operations. In the churchyard at Dadlington, large numbers of the slain were interred; and a few years since, in digging new graves, piles of skeletons were unearthed, lying five or six deep. The ill-fated king's remains were disturbed much earlier; for when the monasteries were secularised, his tomb was destroyed; and it is said that his body was thrown into the river Soar, and his stone coffin afterwards used as a horse-trough. In 1612, however, Wren states in his *Parentalia*, that he saw, in Alderman Robert Heyrick's garden at Leicester, a handsome stone pillar, three feet high, inscribed: 'Here lies the body of RICHARD III., sometime King of England;' and at the present day there is a tablet in King Richard's Road, Leicester, stating that 'Near this spot lie the remains of Richard III., the last of the Plantagenets.' But no grave or mausoleum now exists by which his last resting-place can be verified, and hence those royal remains, unhonoured in death, have long since been scattered—how and where, none now can tell.

At Bosworth Hall, the seat of Sir Beaumont Dixie, are preserved several alleged relics of the fight—such as the suit of armour worn by the king, cannon-balls dug up from the field, and various weapons; although some antiquaries are

of opinion that the last-named belong to a subsequent period.

Close to the well where the king is said to have drunk on the eventful morning, was erected in 1812 a cairn of stones about twelve feet high, with an inscription in Latin to the following effect: 'With water from this spring, Richard III., king of England, quenched his thirst whilst very valorously and with bitterest incensement fighting in battle against Henry, Earl of Richmond, about to lose life as well as sceptre before nightfall, August 22, A.D. 1485.' This well, situated at the northern edge of the wood now existing, is an interesting memorial of the memorable battle of Bosworth Field. In 1862, the British Archaeological Association, then in session at Leicester, visited the spot; and on the site a paper was read, and a fac-simile of the king's crown and various delineations of that monarch and his insignia, exhibited; but although the proceedings of that day aroused a deep interest in the historical events of 1485, they resulted in no practical steps being taken to commemorate the battle.

Since 1862, however, a considerable revival has taken place in antiquarian researches. The impulse which higher education has imparted to such subjects, has awakened an interest in the renowned events of history, and visitors in ever-increasing numbers repair to the spots made classic in their country's annals. On many other English battlefields, memorials have been erected to point out to future generations the scenes of ancient struggles for freedom and power; and yet on Bosworth Field, nothing worthy of the name exists. Among our wealthy citizens, proud of their country and of its long and eventful history, there must be those who would regard it as some honour to take part in perpetuating by a suitable monument the spot where one of the 'decisive' battles in English history took place.

## THE FISHERWOMAN OF HONFLEUR.

### A TALE OF THE FRENCH COMMUNE.

#### IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. III.

ON quitting the *bureau* of the *avocat*, the young fisherman inadvertently wandered into the twentieth arrondissement, formerly a detached village, called Belleville, but now one of the most turbulent districts of Paris, and at that period the headquarters of Communism. He soon discovered that he had strolled away from those parts of the city he wished to see; but as he wandered along, seeking to get clear of the dirty, narrow streets which opened in every direction, whichever way he turned he found himself becoming more and more involved amidst the intricacies of the poverty-stricken quarters; and still, unknown to himself, he was followed by Lucien Pierrot. It would have been difficult, probably, for Lucien to say with what special object he thus followed the young fisherman in his rambles through the city. It was perhaps chiefly that he sought to discover Antoine's motive for coming to Paris so soon after his return from sea; while at the same time he may

have thought that something might occur that would enable him to gratify his long-cherished craving for vengeance. If the latter notion occupied his thoughts, the opportunity occurred sooner than he could have anticipated.

Antoine was passing through one of the longest, crookedest, and narrowest streets of this disreputable district, when he saw, a few paces in advance of him, a young lad of eighteen, who was apparently a stranger in Paris, and who seemed to be wandering about without having any particular object in view. That the young fellow was a peasant, was manifest, not only in his garb, but likewise in his gait, manner, and whole appearance. He wore a blue linen blouse, belted round the waist, and a pair of clumsy sabots, which, together with his leathern gaiters, were incrustated with the dried yellow mud of the country lanes; and as he slouched along, as if he were traversing a newly ploughed field, he stared about him with a look of stupid wonder and curiosity. Suddenly, three of the small, boyish-looking soldiers of which the infantry of France seems to be mainly composed, bearing muskets and fixed bayonets that to a casual observer would appear too heavy for them to carry, pounced upon him from beneath a covered gateway, one of the party seizing him by the collar of his blouse and declaring him to be under arrest.

For a few moments the youth appeared to be stupefied; then he struggled to release himself, but was instantly seized by another of the soldiers, while the third, whose arm bore a corporal's stripe, told him that he had better come quietly to jail.

'Why do you arrest me? What crime have I committed?' whined the young man, as he trembled in every limb. 'I have but this day arrived in Paris. I am a stranger in the city, and am innocent of wrong-doing.'

'Innocent! Of course thou art innocent, *mon brave*,' sneered the corporal. 'Harmless as a lamb. Nobody is ever guilty, according to his own account.—Take the fellow along, comrades!'—addressing the soldiers—'the mob is already closing up behind us.'

This was true. Whence they came, it would have been hard to say; but in less than half a minute, the hitherto almost deserted street was thronging with truculent, ill-looking men, and dirty, frowsy, hard-featured females, clad in every variety of ragged costume, who appeared like so many hideous scarecrows; while still others came forth from every doorway in the narrow street. All took common cause against the soldiers, two of whom levelled their muskets, and prepared to defend themselves from the threatened attack, while the third took charge of the prisoner. Many of the men were armed with short, stout cudgels, and some of the women grasped broom-handles in their sinewy hands. The women were loud in their clamour.

'*Fi donc, fi!*' they cried. 'Let the lad go free, *mouchards*, tyrants—spies that ye are!'

Perceiving that the crowd took his part, the young fellow said: 'Believe me, *citoyens* and *citoyennes*, I am innocent. I have but this day

arrived in Paris. My father is an honest farmer of Clermont. 'Tis the first time I have been in the city. I have come to see my brother, who is an honest artisan, and works somewhere in this quarter of Paris.' There was apparent truth in the young man's looks and voice as he pleaded with the crowd.

'That is doubtless true,' cried a stout, burly virago, whirling a broomstick over her head, to the imminent peril of her companions. 'Poltroons'—addressing the male portion of the crowd—'cowards that ye are! Have ye no spirit, that ye would let a poor lad be dragged to prison, to be shot on the ramparts to-morrow, when half-a-dozen women might set him free?'

Hearing his prophetic doom thus pronounced, the poor lad wept aloud, as he entreated the crowd to release him.

Irritated by the woman's taunts, the men caught up the cry, 'To the rescue! To the rescue!' and bore down savagely upon the soldiers, two of whom bravely kept the leaders of the mob at bay for a few moments by charging with their bayonets. But muskets and bayonets were soon wrested from them; they were struck down and brutally kicked and trampled upon, and their uniforms torn into shreds. The third soldier, however, disregarding the perilous position of his comrades, had retained his grasp of the prisoner, and, unnoticed by the mob, who were fully occupied in wreaking vengeance upon their natural foes, the military, had dragged the unfortunate youth into a by-street, and would speedily have disappeared with him, had not Antoine, who had hitherto looked on as if bewildered, but whose sympathies were with the peasant, hastened to the rescue of the young lad. Wrenching the musket and bayonet from the grasp of the soldier, he struck him senseless to the ground with one blow of his fist. 'Run, lad, run!' he cried. 'Dost not see that thou art free? Away, away!'

The peasant, who for a few moments seemed to have become paralysed with terror, made off as fast as his legs could carry him.

The beat of a drum and the steady tramp of feet were heard near by.

'Scatter! Scatter and fly!' shouted a hoarse voice in the rear of the crowd. 'Do ye not hear! The soldiers are approaching!'

The mob disappeared as rapidly as they had gathered, leaving the unfortunate soldiers stretched on the ground bleeding, bruised, and senseless. In half a minute the front rank of a troop of soldiers appeared at the entrance of the street. Antoine was stooping over the soldier whom he had struck down, striving to restore him to consciousness. He knew not of the approach of the troop until the men were close upon him, when, suddenly becoming aware of his own danger, he took to flight. Some of the soldiers started in pursuit of the fugitive, while the main body hastened to the succour of their hapless comrades. Antoine, however, gained upon his pursuers, and would have escaped, but that on turning the corner of a street, he found himself confronted by another party of soldiers who were hastening to the scene of the disturbance. He stopped short, and was about to take refuge in a narrow court, where he might have concealed himself till the soldiers had passed by, when Lucien Pierrot, who had



never lost sight of the young fisherman, and had witnessed all that had occurred, shouted: 'Seize that man! He is a Communist, and was the leader of the mob.'

In an instant, Antoine was surrounded, seized, and pitilessly dragged off to prison. There was a brief examination before a sergeant of police, in which Lucien Pierrot, who appeared as prosecutor, denounced the prisoner, Antoine Duroc, as a Communist leader of the lowest and vilest class, and swore that he had seen the prisoner strike a soldier down with his own hand and brutally maltreat him, thus effecting the release of a man under arrest.

Antoine, who declared that he was not a Communist, and that he knew not the meaning of the word, did not attempt to deny that he had struck down a soldier, and released a poor young peasant whom he believed to be innocent. This was enough; he was ordered to be confined and closely guarded until he could be brought before the military authorities the next day. The jailer, however, who was a native of Brittany, and had heard the young fisherman's simple story, believed in his innocence. He knew Lucien Pierrot as a paid government spy, and believed him capable of any falsehood or iniquity whereby he might gratify his malice against any individual who had offended him, or might pocket a reward for his vigilance in behalf of the government. He pitied the unfortunate prisoner; and Antoine, who felt the need of sympathy, spoke of his young wife, who would now be impatiently awaiting his return from Paris.

'It grieves me sorely, Monsieur,' he added, 'that I have no means of acquainting my poor Madeleine with the misfortune that has befallen me. She will not know what to think, and will fear that some serious accident has happened to me.'

'Thou canst write to thy wife, *mon ami*,' said the jailer. 'I will post the letter.'

'Monsieur, I cannot write,' replied Antoine.

'Then tell me what thou would'st say, and I will write for thee.'

Antoine dictated a few lines, informing Madeleine that he was in prison in Paris, having been denounced as a Communist by a government spy named Lucien Pierrot; but, anxious not to alarm his wife, he expressed the hope that he would speedily be released, and that he would be able, when taken before the court, to prove his innocence.

The jailer shook his head gravely, but made no remark; and probably Antoine himself did not feel the confidence in his speedy release that he sought to impart to his wife; though, being ignorant of the dreadful severity with which those who were suspected of Communism were punished, he doubted not that he would be set at liberty in the course of a few days at the furthest.

The letter was despatched; and was received by Madeleine at the moment when she was setting forth to meet her husband at the Honfleur railroad *dépot*, fully expecting him to return that day.

The young wife was dreadfully alarmed on reading the letter. 'It is my fault,' she thought. 'I am to blame. I ought not to have concealed from my husband the base conduct of the villain

Lucien Pierrot. He threatened me with vengeance, and now he has accomplished his purpose. If I had told Antoine, he would have been on his guard against the wretch, and this trouble would not have occurred. But I acted, as I thought, for the best.' She sunk into a chair, and for a few minutes felt perfectly helpless; but recollecting that it was necessary to exert herself immediately in her husband's behalf, she determined to proceed instantly to the mayor of Honfleur and seek his advice and assistance.

Monsieur le Maire was himself the owner of numerous fishing-luggers. Antoine was known to him, and was a favourite with him; and Madeleine knew that he would do all in his power to help her in her sore trouble. He read the letter, and heard from Madeleine the story of Lucien Pierrot's base conduct towards her. That Antoine had no connection with Communism, he was well aware; but he read the journals constantly, and he knew that the government, having been terribly frightened, were now proceeding with ruthless severity against all persons even suspected of complicity with Communism. That the young fisherman was guiltless of any such complicity, he could prove, if it were not already too late; but then he knew nothing of Antoine's having assaulted a soldier and released a man under arrest. Nothing of this was mentioned in the letter.

'You must hasten immediately to Paris,' he said. 'I know not what else to advise. I am acquainted with the *sous-préfet* of police—a worthy man, who will do all in his power to help you, if satisfied that your husband is innocent. But you must lose no time. I will give you a letter to Monsieur le Sous-préfet.—Shall you need money?' Not wishing to alarm Madeleine, the mayor said nothing to her of his own fear that it might be already too late to save her husband. He wrote the letter, and handed it to her, and having been assured that she needed no help in money, advised her to set forth immediately.

The young wife needed no urging. Anticipating the result of her interview with the mayor, she had left her babe in charge of a kind neighbour; and proceeding instantly to the railway station, she, after five tedious hours, reached Paris. A stranger, unaccustomed to the noise, bustle, and confusion of a great city, she felt for the moment bewildered and lost. But the errand she had come upon quickened her faculties and inspired her with a desperate courage. Her first idea was to visit her husband and gladden him with her presence; and inquiring her way of different persons whom she met, she soon found the prison in which Antoine was confined. But, on requesting admission, she was informed that, without a special order from a magistrate, no person was permitted, under any circumstances, to visit or to have any communication whatever with a prisoner. It was terrible for her to gaze upon the stone walls of the prison, and knowing that her husband was confined within those walls, to be refused permission to see him. But wasting no time in useless lamentation, she hired a conveyance, and was driven to the abode of the *sous-préfet*, some little distance beyond the city. It was already late when she reached the house; but she rang the bell, and gained admittance.

Monsieur le Préfet had just dined, she was informed by a servant, and would see no person on business that evening; she must attend at the police court the next morning. But on her producing the letter from the mayor of Honfleur, the servant said that he would acquaint Monsieur with her presence.

The sous-préfet was seated at a table reading an evening journal, when the servant entered and informed his master that a young woman wished to see him on business of importance.

'At this hour!' exclaimed the préfet angrily. 'I cannot be disturbed. You should have told her so. Tell her to call at my bureau to-morrow.'

The servant withdrew, but presently re-appeared.

'What now, sirrah?' demanded the préfet.

'Monsieur,' replied the servant, 'the young woman will not go away. She says she must see you on a matter of life and death, and she bade me hand you this letter.'

With an exclamation of angry annoyance, the préfet glanced over the contents of the letter.

'Who is this woman? What does she look like?' he asked.

'She is very young, Monsieur, and seems to be in sore trouble. She told me she had travelled a long distance.'

'Well, well; show her up-stairs.'

The servant again withdrew; and in a few moments returned, accompanied by Madeleine, frightened, even amidst her sorrow, at the grandeur—to her eyes—by which she was surrounded.

'Enter, Madame,' said the préfet, who appeared to be surprised at the extreme youth and remarkable appearance of the young woman in her fisherwoman's garb. 'Pray, be seated, Madame,' he continued in a gentler tone of voice; 'and please to tell me briefly and clearly the object of your visit to Paris. I learn from my friend the mayor's letter that your husband is in prison, charged with complicity with Communism. My friend writes to assure me that he can certify that your husband cannot possibly be connected with the infamous Communists.'

'No; my husband knows nothing of the matter, Monsieur,' said Madeleine; and then she briefly told how it happened that he had visited Paris at this time.

'Then he arrived but three days ago, young woman?' said the préfet. 'His name? Ah!'—again glancing over the mayor's letter—'I see; Antoine Duroc. It strikes me,' he went on, 'that I have some recollection of that name.' He rose, went to a writing-table, and returned and re-seated himself, glancing over the pages of a rough ledger or memorandum-book. As he did so, he read, as if to himself, yet loud enough for Madeleine to hear: 'Antoine Duroc, fisherman, aged twenty-three years, charged with inciting a mob to attack the military, and with having himself violently assaulted a soldier and released a prisoner who was under arrest. Denounced as a dangerous Communist by Lucien Pierrot.'

'This is a serious matter, young woman,' said the préfet to Madeleine; 'much more serious than my friend's letter led me to anticipate. It is out of my power to interfere in the matter, even if I had the wish to do so; and I have no

sympathy with the Communists, nor with individuals who incite others to offend against the laws.'

'Oh, believe me, Monsieur!' interrupted Madeleine, wringing her hands in an agony of distress; 'it is false that my husband is what you call a Communist. He knows not the meaning of the word. I have heard nothing of his having assaulted a soldier and released a prisoner. He said nothing of that in his letter to me; and I do not believe it is true that he has done such a thing. But, Monsieur, this man, Lucien Pierrot, is a vile wretch, who swears the lives of innocent men away for gain, and is unworthy of credence. He has vowed vengeance against my husband and me because I refused to listen to his base importunities;' and then blushing with shame amidst her distress, she related to the préfet the story of Lucien's conduct to her previous to her marriage. While she was speaking, the daughter of the préfet, a young and pretty girl of fifteen years, entered the room, and approaching her father, said: 'Dear papa, I am come to wish you good-night.' Then perceiving Madeleine for the first time, she became silent, and stood gazing pitifully upon the young fisherwoman from behind her father's chair.

'It is sad—very sad, my poor woman,' said the préfet, when Madeleine had ended her story; 'but, as I have told you, I have no power to interfere in the prisoner's behalf. Your husband is charged with a military offence. He will be tried by court-martial to-morrow morning. I dare not bid you hope for his acquittal. Such wretches as the man Pierrot are necessary to the government in such times as this. His oath will be taken by the members of the court-martial in preference to that of the accused, even though they regard the accuser with contempt. The trial will be brief, and the sentence of the court-martial will be immediately carried into effect. It is quite impossible for me to say or do anything in behalf of your husband that will be of the least service to him.'

'Ah, Monsieur,' sighed Madeleine, 'at what hour to-morrow will the trial take place?'

'At seven o'clock. It will likely be over by nine o'clock; and at noon the sentence of the court will be carried out. A great number of prisoners await their trial by court-martial to-morrow.'

Madeleine, weeping bitterly, threw herself on her knees before the préfet. 'Monsieur, Monsieur!' she cried, 'it is terrible. Men are wolves. They have no pity. But can heaven permit such injustice? Monsieur, as you hope for mercy on the last great day, intercede for my innocent husband! Save him, Monsieur, and I will pray for you, and will teach my innocent babe to pray for you and yours so long as we may live.'

'I pity you with all my heart,' replied the préfet, in a tone of deep sympathy; 'but again I assure you I can do nothing for you; I am powerless to help you. Paris is under martial law. The civil authorities are superseded for the time being by the military. I cannot interfere with the trial or sentence of a court-martial.' He advanced towards the suppliant young wife, and held forth his hand to assist her to rise; but Madeleine, overcome by the intensity of her affliction, fainted, and sank down on the floor.

The préfet rang the bell, and when the servant appeared, bade him send some of the female domestics to the assistance of the poor woman. The women came; and Madeleine, having partially recovered consciousness, was tenderly assisted from the room. 'Take care of her, poor creature,' said the préfet. 'Let her rest a while before she goes away; and if she will partake of it, give her some refreshment.'

'Poor woman! so young, and so pretty!' he soliloquised, when the servants had withdrawn with the agonised wife. 'I pity her sincerely; but I cannot assist her. Any interference on my part would be worse than useless.—Pauline, my love,' he went on, looking round for his daughter, whom he now recollected had entered the room while the young woman was kneeling before him.

But Pauline had disappeared; she had quitted the room with the servants and their helpless, sorrowing burden.

The sous-préfet did not resume the perusal of his journal. He was a man of kindly feelings, despite the hardening influences to which he was constantly subjected through his official position; and though he had his doubts, as men in his position always have in such cases, he was inclined to believe that Antoine had been falsely and maliciously accused. Yet he felt that he could not interfere in the prisoner's behalf.

At the end of half an hour, his daughter re-entered the room.

'Ah, Pauline, my darling, where hast thou been?' he cried. 'Thou wert here awhile since. Why didst thou go away, my child?'

'Papa,' replied the young girl, drawing near to her father, and placing her arm round his neck, 'I went after that poor young fisher-woman.'

'But the servants will take good care of her, my pet.'

'Yes, dear papa; but I took her to my own apartment and made her tell me *all* her story. She dared not tell you all. She was frightened, poor thing. O papa! it is so sad—so sad! I am sure, quite sure that the poor man is innocent of the political crimes imputed to him; and I have made the poor young wife promise to come here early to-morrow. I told her you would try to do something for her. And you *will*—will you not, dear papa, for my sake?'

'Pauline, darling, you have done very wrong; you have encouraged the poor woman to hope for assistance that I cannot render. I am powerless in the matter, as I have told her already—even if I were sure of the man's innocence.'

'Sure, papa!' exclaimed Pauline. 'Can you doubt? You will not doubt to-morrow, when you have heard all.'

'My darling,' answered the sous-préfet, 'no matter how strongly I may believe in the poor man's innocence, I can do nothing for him. He will be tried by court-martial in the morning, and in a few minutes will be either acquitted or condemned. They waste no time in these cases. If he be found guilty, as is most probable, he will be shot before noon.'

'Papa, you *must* do something,' persisted the young girl. 'There is always time till the last moment. You will restore the poor woman's husband to her. Think over what I have said,

papa; and now, good-night;' and kissing her father, Pauline hastened from the room before the préfet could make any reply.

## A RECEPTION AT THE VATICAN.

SINCE the establishment of United Italy, the Pope rarely leaves his own palace. Rather than occupy a secondary place in the marvellous city, where his predecessors long sat supreme, and whence they ruled Christendom, he lives a life of splendid seclusion. The Vatican is an enormous pile of buildings adjoining St Peter's, comprising thousands of apartments, a hundred and fifty staircases, as also museums, and an almost fabulous amount of art treasures in painting, sculpture, and antiquities. Its exterior, though not beautiful, is imposing from its size; but on the interior is lavished everything that is magnificent and costly in adornment—the rarest and most splendid marbles, oriental alabaster, mosaic pavements—until the spectator is bewildered by the very extent of its richness. There are beautiful private gardens, in which the Pope is frequently carried in a sedan-chair; but at those times the public are rigorously excluded, so that the only opportunity of seeing him is by obtaining admission to an audience, and such permission is sparingly given.

On a certain Easter Monday morning, we set out for the Vatican in the dazzling sunlight of an Italian April; through the narrow, shady streets, with their picturesque groups of people, shifting and changing like the figures in a kaleidoscope. Soon we cross the Bridge of St Angelo, where Bernini's angels look on the yellow Tiber; then past the Castle of St Angelo with its look of hoary age; then lastly into the Piazza of St Peter, with its Egyptian obelisk and leaping fountains, half encircled by the immense colonnades which lead to the great church in the centre.

Descending from our carriage, and passing through the bronze gate, we enter the guardroom at the foot of the regal staircase, where the Guards, in their extraordinary dress of striped scarlet and yellow, are on duty. Our *permesso* was here inspected; and we then went up Bernini's beautiful staircase, with its fine columns and painted roof. After passing the equestrian statue of Constantine, we go through a bewildering succession of apartments and galleries, marshalled on at each turn by private servants of the Pope, in costumes of crimson velvet brocade. Next, we enter that wonderful series of frescoed chambers where the masterpieces of Raphael look down in colours scarcely faded since they left the great master's hand. On this occasion, however, one cannot pause to do more than glance at the 'School of Athens,' or the astounding 'Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple,' where the sacrilegious intruder seems absolutely hurled across the threshold of the sacred building. Last in succession is the Hall of Constantine, with the battle of the Ponte Molle, which changed the fate of the Empire from heathenism to Christianity. This Hall was painted by Giulio Romano, from Raphael's designs.

After passing through an antechamber, filled with chamberlains and other dignitaries, we were shown into the Geographical Gallery, where the audience was to take place. This Gallery, which

is not generally shown to the public, is of very great length, being about one hundred and sixty yards. The walls are entirely covered with frescoed maps, painted in a realistic way, with ships sailing on the blue seas, and the mountains and forests shaded-in. The effect is curious, and very beautiful. The roof is also frescoed; and the floor is of inlaid and highly polished marble. Rows of busts on pedestals against the walls, and seats painted to imitate marble, are its only furniture. The windows on one side look into the lovely private gardens.

We arrived a little before half-past eleven, the time fixed for the audience; and although it soon became evident that punctuality was not intended, the novelty of the scene was amply sufficient to prevent any feeling of weariness. Each person on arriving was shown to his or her place by an official. All the ladies present were in black dresses, with long black veils, worn over the head like Spanish mantillas. The gentlemen were in evening dress. The clerical element in the assemblage was very strong—priests from various lands; sandalled monks of different orders, with rosary at girdle, and robes of white or brown according to their rule, waiting what to them was a great event. Next to us was a group of French priests, who were going as missionaries beyond the borders of civilisation in the far East, who had come to receive a special benediction from the Holy Father before leaving for their dangerous work. A little farther off was a venerable monk, whose long silvery beard and hair, and bent form, seemed to speak of many years beyond the usual age of man. He had come a long distance to have an interview with the head of his Church. Nearly all the persons present had objects to be blessed by the Pope, chiefly rosaries; but many had medallions and crucifixes, and not a few little models of the bronze statue of St Peter in the church—the statue whose toe is so often and so reverently kissed, that it had to be renewed, and is again being worn away. The missionaries next us had an immense number of rosaries to take out with them.

After waiting more than two hours, the doors at the farther end of the gallery were opened, and a brilliant group appeared in the opening. The distance was so great that we could not distinctly see its several parts, only a general effect of bright colours, in which splendid uniforms predominated. This group at first appeared to be stationary; then, after a time, we became conscious it was moving, but so slowly and with such frequent pauses, as to be almost imperceptible. By degrees it came nearer, and we saw two chamberlains walking backwards; then came some of the Guardia Nobile, the Pope's bodyguard, each member of which is a nobleman, and wears a tall crested helmet like an old Roman. Then came a number of stately dignitaries in violet robes, Cardinals and Monsignors; and at last we caught a glimpse in the centre of a small figure entirely in white—his Holiness himself—then more violet robes, and lastly, more guards, closing the procession. It was impossible to see that slowly advancing figure, with its imposing surroundings, without being most powerfully impressed. He is the representative of a power—a spiritual hierarchy—which, as Macaulay says, 'can certainly boast of a far longer succession

than any dignity in the world; linking together the two great ages of human civilisation. Our modern feudal kings are mere upstarts compared with the successors in regular order, not, to be sure, of Peter, but of Sylvester and Leo the Great.'

A Monsignor who walked by the side of the Pope, asked the name, nationality, and religion of each person, for the information of his Holiness, who then said a few words. He speaks only Italian and French. He had a short conversation in the latter language with the priests next us, which of course we could distinctly hear. They spoke of their intended mission; and he replied that the merit of such actions lay in the intention, less than in their successful performance.

The Pope is small and frail in figure, with the whitest and most bleached-looking complexion it is possible to conceive. One could scarcely imagine him able to go through the prolonged fatigue entailed by even such a ceremony as that in which we saw him. His manner is most gracious and pleasing, and his expression of countenance benevolent. He was dressed in a white cloth robe with small cape, white skull-cap, and white shoes embroidered with a cross; a white silk sash, with gold-fringed ends, round his waist. A large cross of magnificent emeralds was the only spot of colour in his attire. The Pontifical ring, which it is the etiquette to kiss, was especially splendid, and appeared to have the head of St Peter engraved upon it. A dignitary carried his scarlet cloak; and another, the large hat of the same colour, tied up and edged with gold cord. He remained a few minutes in colloquy with our party, which happened to be the last in the assembly. Then turning round to face the gathering, he blessed it collectively, with outstretched arms, in the name of the Trinity. The whole of the persons present, guards and attendants, knelt to receive the benediction. This closed the ceremony.

Immediately thereafter, the cloak was placed upon his shoulders by the official who carried it; and then, having been covered by the hat in like manner, he disappeared through the door opposite to the one by which he entered, his retinue following. The audience was at an end. We returned, by a different suite of rooms, to the Scala Regia, which we descended, much pleased with our glimpse of the Papal Court as witnessed in a Reception at the Vatican.

#### READY RETORTS.

THE number of witty replies, ready retorts, and 'good things' generally attributed to Swift, Foote, Sydney Smith, Sheridan, and other departed celebrities, would doubtless considerably astonish those gentlemen, were they to return to life. Happy thoughts are not confined to acknowledged wits, however. Most of us have sometimes had occasion to say: 'What a good repartee such and such an answer would have been, had we only thought of it in time.' But there is the rub. It is not given to every one, perhaps fortunately for the general peace, to be as ready at retort, for example, as the critic to whom the following question was addressed by an artist: 'Don't you think it is about time I exhibited something?' 'Yes; a little talent, for instance,' was the reply.—To a grocer who had retired from business,



a friend said: 'My dear fellow, you are looking thin; idleness does not agree with you.' 'Well, no,' instantly replied the grocer; 'I don't weigh so much as I did.'

Another tradesman, a Quaker, who sold hats, was asked by a rustic the price of one. 'Fifteen shillings,' was the reply. The intending purchaser offered twelve shillings.

'As I live,' said the Quaker, 'I cannot afford to give it thee at that price.'

'As you live!' exclaimed the countryman; 'then live more moderately, my friend.'

A tailor and his son were doing a day's work at a farmhouse. The prudent housewife, to secure a good day's work, lighted candles when daylight began to fade. The tailor looked at his son and said: 'Jock, confound them that invented working by candlelight!' 'Ay,' replied young snip, 'or daylight either!'—'You have no idea of the hard work there is in this business,' said a canvasser to a shopkeeper. 'I tell you it is either talking or walking from morning till night.' 'Beg pardon,' replied the victim. 'I have a pretty distinct idea of the talking part of your programme. Now, please favour me with an exhibition of the walking part.'

A sarcastic question may sometimes do duty for the severest of replies. 'I never consider a dinner perfect without soup,' said one man to another; 'I always have soup when I dine.' 'And do you ever have anything else?' returned the other.—A punning retort is also at times very effective. 'I had no time to stuff the chicken,' apologised a landlady. 'Never mind, madam; it's tough enough as it is,' quickly replied the boarder.—Another landlady, who tried to be smart, was as effectually silenced. 'I think the goose has the advantage of you,' she remarked to an expert boarder who was carving. 'Guess it has, mum, in age,' was the ready retort.

'Here, waiter; what do you call this you've brought me?' inquired a customer.

Waiter. 'Ham, sir; you ordered ham.'

Customer. 'When was it cooked?'

Waiter (snappishly). 'I don't know, sir; we don't put tags on with the date and time of cooking!'

Customer. 'You ought to. This ham was cooked thirty or forty years ago. Bring me some that was cooked this year.'

The customer does not at all times have the victory; sometimes it falls to the waiter. A bustling, fussy 'commercial,' waiting impatiently for his dinner, called out to the waiter: 'John, how long will that steak of mine be?' 'Why,' replied John quietly, 'about the usual length, sir—about eight inches.'

Two American gentlemen in the course of their travels stopped at a small café in the suburbs of Paris, for refreshments. Their repast was a light one, consisting of tea, toast, and eggs; but the bill was a heavy one—nine francs in all. 'Garçon,' exclaimed one of the tourists, 'how's this? Please, explain.'

'Well you see, Messieurs,' explained the waiter—'two francs for the tea and toast, and seven francs for the eggs.'

'Ah, then, eggs are very scarce about here?'

'No, Monsieur; eggs are not scarce, but Americans are!'

'What do you mean by a cat-and-dog life?'

said a husband to his angry wife. 'Look at Carlo and Kitty asleep on the rug; I wish men lived half as agreeably with their wives.' 'Stop!' said the lady. 'Tie them together, and see how they will agree!'—As ready, but more curious, was the reply of a nurse. She was telling about a man who had become so worn-out through intemperance that he could not keep any food on his stomach, when one of her listeners asked: 'What does he live on, then?'

'On his relations, ma'am,' was the answer.

The replies given by impulsive children when scolded and so forth, are often as apt as they are entertaining. In the country, for instance, a bright little girl was sent to get some eggs, and on her way back stumbled and fell, making sad havoc among the contents of her basket. 'Won't you catch it when you get home though!' exclaimed her companion. 'No; indeed I won't,' she answered; 'I've got a grandmother.'—'Sophy, if you don't be quiet, I shall have to whip you,' said the father of a large family, who always left the disagreeable duty of punishing the unruly to his wife. 'Pooh!' contemptuously retorted the little incorrigible he addressed, tossing her curly head—'you ain't the mother.'—'How old are you, my little man?' asked a gentleman of a youngster of three years, to whom he was being introduced. 'I'm not old,' replied the little man; 'I'm almost new.'

Boys retorts are, as may be expected, generally of the rude kind; as when a woman said to a youngster who had been impudent to her: 'Little boy, have you a mother?' 'No; but Dad wouldn't marry you if there wasn't a house-keeper in the whole blessed land,' was the reply. '—Charley,' said a mother to her seven-year-old boy, 'you must not interrupt me when I am talking with ladies. You must wait till we stop, and then you can talk.' 'But you never stop!' retorted the boy.—Little Tommy was having his hair combed by his mother, and he grumbled at the operation. 'Why, Tommy, you oughtn't to make such a fuss. I don't, when my hair is combed.' 'Yes; but *your* hair ain't hitched to your head.'

Equally pertinent was the answer given by a great musical composer to a remark. When a youth, he was clerk to a very rich but exceedingly commonplace, in fact stupid employer. One day, an acquaintance commiserated the clever lad on his position, saying: 'What a pity it is that you are not the master, and he your clerk.'—'Oh, my friend,' returned the youth, 'do not say that. If he were my clerk, what on earth could I do with him?'

Even clergymen cannot always hope to meet with the courtesy that draws the line at sharp rejoinders. 'If you can't keep awake,' said a parson to one of his hearers, 'when you feel drowsy, why don't you take a pinch of snuff?' 'I think,' was the shrewd reply, 'the snuff should be put into the sermon.'—Some years ago, we are told, the Isle of Sheppey being an inconsiderable parish, and the income not very large, the vicar came there but once a month. The parishioners being much displeased at this, desired their clerk, who was that year churchwarden also, to remonstrate with him as to his negligence. The clerk told the vicar the wishes of the parishioners; and the reply was: 'Well, well; tell them if they

give me ten pounds a year more, I will come to see them once a fortnight; and be sure to let me know their answer the next time I come.' The next time he did come, he accordingly asked, and the clerk answered: 'Sir, they say as how if you will excuse them ten pounds a year in their tithes, they will dispense with your coming at all!'

Members of the cloth are not always above severely criticising one another's failings. It is related of that most eloquent of English clergymen, Robert Hall, that he once—disgusted by the egotism and conceit of a preacher who, with a mixture of self-complacency and impudence, challenged his admiration of a sermon—was provoked to say: 'Yes; there was one very fine passage of your discourse, sir.' 'I am rejoiced to hear you say so; which was it?' 'Why, sir, it was the passage from the pulpit to the vestry.'

The legal profession may naturally be expected to develop the powers of repartee. There is a well-known anecdote of a judge saying, 'One at a time, gentlemen,' when a donkey brayed outside the court just as a lawyer was eloquently holding forth; and that the lawyer retaliated later on by remarking, 'There was a strange echo in court,' on the judge, when interrupted, absently inquiring the cause of the very same noise.

Another story, in which the same too often despised animal figures, may not be so well known. A country Laird, who had lately been elected to the office of a county magistrate, meeting a clerical gentleman on horseback, attempted jocularity by remarking that he was more ambitious than his Master, who was content to ride upon an ass. 'They canna be gotten noo,' said the minister; 'for they're a' made justices of the peace.'

Even lawyers, with all their smartness and assurance, don't always come off best in a wordy duel. An attorney said to an Irishman, his client: 'Why don't you pay me that six-and-eight-pence?' 'Why, faith, because I do not owe it to you.' 'Not owe it to me? Yes, you do; it's for the opinion you had of me.' 'That's good, indeed,' rejoined Pat, 'when I never had any opinion of you in all my life.'—Equally good was the retort made to Serjeant Cockle by a witness. In a trial of a right of fishery, he asked the witness: 'Don't you love fish?' 'Ay,' replied the witness, with a grin; 'but I dunna like Cockle sauce with it!'

An agent canvassing a voter and getting many evasive replies to his cross-examination, at last exclaimed sharply: 'Confound your quibbling! Tell me, then, what your opinions are—your conscientious opinions, I mean.'—'They are the same as my landlord's.'—'And what are your landlord's opinions?'—'Faix, his opinion is that I won't pay him the last half-year's rent; and I'm of the same opinion myself.'

The Irishman who on asking an intruder in his cabin what he wanted, and receiving the answer, 'Nothing,' said he would find it in the jug where the whisky was, had an equal in promptness in a New-Yorker, whom an 'uncertain' acquaintance addressed as follows: 'I'm a little short, and would like to ask you a conundrum in mental arithmetic.'—'Proceed,' observed the gentleman.—'Well,' said the 'short' man, 'suppose you had ten dollars in your pocket, and I should ask you for five dollars, how much would remain?'—'Ten dollars,' was the prompt answer.

'What do you mean by standing there with your hands in your pockets?' asked an employer, addressing a rather indolent workman. 'Nothing much; 'spect you'd be making a noise if I had them in yours,' replied the incorrigible.—'Did you get her photo. when you were away?' said one Freshman to another. 'Well—ah!—the fact is,' returned his companion, 'she gave me her negative.'

'How did you learn that graceful attitude?' said a gentleman to an intoxicated fellow leaning in a maudlin fashion against a post. 'I have been practising at a glass,' was the reply.—Remarkable quickness at repartee was displayed by an actor at the Belleville theatre, when some one threw the head of a goose on the stage. Advancing to the front, the player said: 'Gentlemen, if any one amongst you has lost his head, do not be uneasy, for I will restore it at the conclusion of the performance.'

Not many would feel in much humour for joking, we should think, after the excitement of catching a thief in one's house, yet here is an instance to the contrary. A burglar was caught by a gentleman in the back drawing-room, and a policeman sent for at once. 'You ought to be grateful to me,' said the thief, 'instead of treating me like this 'ere. I only came in to tell you the front-door was open, and I was afeared you'd get robbed.'—'Excellent reasoning, no doubt, my friend,' said the householder; 'but on wrong premises, I fancy!'

A lady who asked a sailor why a ship was called 'she,' received the ungallant reply, that it was because her rigging cost so much.—Equally smart was the reply of the sea-captain who was invited to meet the Committee of a Society for the Evangelisation of Africa. When asked: 'Do the subjects of the king of Dahomey keep Sunday?' he replied: 'Yes, and everything else they can lay their hands on.'

Perhaps as much presence of mind as shown in any of the above instances was displayed on the following occasion. A young gentleman getting into a railway carriage, happened to press the foot of a young lady who was sitting next to the door. The damsel, contracting her pretty brow into a frown, ejaculated: 'You clumsy wretch!' Many men would have looked foolish and apologised; but he exclaimed: 'My dear young lady, you should have feet large enough to be seen, and then they wouldn't be trodden upon.' Her frowns instantly changed into smiles, and the injury was forgotten.

#### FAIRYLAND AND FAIRIES.

WHERE is Fairyland? There are no finger-posts anywhere pointing to it. It is not in Murray's Guides. But—how, we hardly know—we are sometimes lucky enough to be taken thither by the poets and the children; for, oddly enough, the poets and the children are like each other, and often walk the same way. True, the Scientific Societies would reduce Fairyland to an exhalation of fancy, and blow the fairies off in vapour. But we object to seeing our most precious conceptions resolved into their original elements and then destroyed beyond help; though we should like to know, in the proper place and season, how those same conceptions originate, and even

what stuff they are made of. So we leave the learned wights with their destructive crucibles; and as becomes pilgrims to Fairyland, choose our company among more ardent and simple folk—the poets and the children. Where, then, is Fairyland, and why does it exist?

Chaucer places the realm of Faëry underground with Pluto and Proserpine. In the old days of romance, knights found it in the ocean island of Avalon, where, stepping ashore in darkness from wreck to wreck, they entered the lighted castle, peopled by beautiful maidens and men transformed by enchantment. In Spenser's time, this realm could not have been so far off, for he saw in it the shadow of England. A little later, Drayton imagined it high in air, poised by magic midway between the earth and the moon, with an aerial route, *vid* the moon, down to this world. His minute touch built up the palace with walls of deftly mortised spiders' legs; and all its architectural arrangements, chiefly of insect material, were the strangest ever imagined:

The windows, of the eyes of cats;  
And for the roof, instead of slats,  
Is covered with the skins of bats  
With moonshine that are gilded.

No doubt it was from such a palace, but with more of beauty and less of the grotesque in its furniture, that Tom Hood's fairy, after two centuries and more, began to come down the moon-beam-path, bringing the dreams of little children. She uses the old road that Drayton found; but her lightness and brightness are beyond his fancy:

A little Fairy comes at night;  
Her eyes are blue, her hair is brown,  
With silver spots upon her wings;  
And from the moon she flutters down.

Drayton's courtiers and ladies of 'the Fairy court' were little creatures that could huddle together and hide in an empty nut-shell; and littleness and lightness are by this time permanent attributes of the fairy creation. But in the early history of Fairyland, its people were of larger growth. In the old Gallic and Breton romances, they were merely men and women possessed of magical powers; and in Brittany—a country intimately connected with the rise of Fairyland—the fairies, that are supposed to haunt the *landes* and glide round the Druidic stones by night, are not tricky elves, but tall maidens of more than mortal stature, willing to enchant and marry mortal men.

Before the Elizabethan age, while the fairies were holding their own, and growing rather than dwindling in Western France, the merry sprites and elves were in England driving the full-grown enchanters from the field. But with Shakespeare came a patent of immortality to the little harmless crew. He left the bounds of Fairyland indefinitely fixed; but he fixed for ever as the property of the poet the most picturesque parts of the popular belief. For evermore the 'shrewd and knavish' Puck was to be 'the merry wanderer of the night,' with an historic reputation for destroying the peace of village maids and housewives; tangling the skein of love among mortals; enjoying their discomfiture at his wiles, and even setting them astray when he means well. Evermore, Oberon and Titania will preserve in poetry their character for miffs and tiffs, love and

jealousy, almost in play—a bright-coloured reflection of human passions, without their depth or their sorrows. And evermore the fairies will have their allotted work to do, making elves' coats out of the leathern wings of bats, teasing away the owl that hoots and wonders at their revels, dewing the rings that are to be danced on at night, and killing cankers in the rose-buds; and henceforth they will always be small enough to creep into acorn-cups. By *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Fairyland became an indestructible reality in the region of fancy; through poetry the cultured must know it for ever, even when the unlettered, who once believed in it most, may forget it completely.

The poets and the children have kept up this race of beautiful imaginary beings for the very same reason. Both have strong imagination; both in a different manner have an attraction towards wonders and bright fancies; to both the commonplace is but dull ground. The early poets and writers of romance embalmed the popular beliefs for the sake of the facility they afforded for exercising invention in describing the marvellous, and for the easy working out of stories of wonder. The children have the same delight in the marvellous, and the same preference for a tale wherein the most startling wonders are possible. To the first writers who chronicled fairy achievements, in the time when Faëry only signified something of 'glamour might,' this wonder-working was not so great a strain upon the fancy of reasoning minds, as it is now in these more scientific ages. In the same way the marvels of children's tales are interesting to the inexperienced listeners, because they do not seem so wildly impossible as to forbid interest. It has been well said that a little child in a garden would not be much astonished if a stone urn changed into a dragon among the grass; though in truth, science has greater wonders in store for the child yet, and travel has more beautiful sights to astonish him, than are to be found in any magic changes, or in the fancied picture of a fairy tale. Very strangely, too, we send the word back to its mediæval meaning when we name many of the nursery stories, *fairy* tales; for stories like *Red Riding Hood* do not deal with fairies, but with marvels. Until the nature of children—that is, until human nature—changes, stories of wonder will be craved by the young; and until our ideas of poetic thought become completely altered, there will be space kept in the realms of poetry for the bright airy creatures that live in moonlight, familiar with flowers and insects.

From the maturer popular belief, they are fast fading away. Weakly and puny infants are no longer supposed to be fairy changelings, except in districts so remote that the newspapers cannot reach them, nor the new broom of the School Boards sweep them clean. Even the fairies of the Border, about whom Sir Walter Scott told us, and the fairies of the Sister Island—familiarily yet deferentially called 'the good people'—are fast vanishing for ever. It is Fairyland itself that cannot be destroyed, since the *Midsummer Night's Dream* is immortal with its quaint fancies, and human childhood with its needs. As for the Fairyland of the Christmas theatres, it is but an imperfect imitation of the original.

In the lath-and-canvas Fairyland, with stage carpenters, ropes and pulleys, lime-lights and ballet-girls, there is produced in the transformation scene a certain amount of beautiful scenery changing under many-coloured lights. But the moonlit elfin scene 'laid like a dream upon the green earth's lap,' is very different from the spectacle in glare and heat behind the footlights; the studied dance of the *corps de ballet* is not the circling roundel among grass and mushrooms; the artificial fairies are not like the happy sprites of Nature that do kind turns to drooping flowers, and have a speaking acquaintance with every insect.

As unlike in the opposite extreme, but perfectly original and charming, was the well-known Fairyland in the cloud region above the 'Wicked World,' devised in contrast to the land of ballets, and as a shadow of a more real world off the boards and beneath the clouds. 'A pleasant dreamy land, with no bright colour in it—a land where it is always bright moonlight—a land where there is nothing whatever to do but to sit and chat with good, pleasant-looking people, who like a joke, and can make one, and can take one too—a land where there is no such thing as hunger, sleep, fatigue, illness, or old age—a land where no collars or boots are worn—a land where there is no love-making, but plenty of innocent love ready-made.' This most pleasant of all invented Fairylands is peopled by women supremely lovely—a return to the oldest Fairylands of romance, but with some difference of manners and customs. 'They wear long robes high in the throat, falling loosely and gracefully to the very feet, and each fairy has a necklace of the very purest diamonds. They have wings—large soft downy wings—six feet high like the wings of angels;' and by some spiritual contrivance, it is stated, these wings do not crackle or crumple under the fairies when they sit down.

We should like to hear more tales of such Fairylands with fairies of homely name—Fair Mary the Queen, and Mattie, and Kate; but so far, this is an excellent example of the breadth of invention possible in dealing with fairy nature, and the flights of fancy that yet may come when the name is merely used to suggest the fair and the marvellous in an unearthly creation. How it is that fairies in even the wildest fancies must be fair unless they be evil, is hinted as far back as the old romance of *Lancelot du Lac*, where we find the origin of their universal beauty. At that time, says the romance, all were called fays who dealt in charms and enchantments, and many such there were in Great Britain; and knowing the power and virtue that lies in wood, stones, and herbs, they were able to be young, beautiful, and richly dressed, just as they devised. It seems rather a pity to interfere with this beautiful race, and take their splendour to pieces, by disputing whether they were *peris* of Persia, or Hebrew spirits, or Roman Fates, or Gallic *fées*, in their first origin; whether they were the nymphs and fauns with which untaught races were wont to people the woods and fountains, and by whose doings they interpreted Nature's mysteries; or whether, as one theory goes, they were puny cave-men, who descended upon their civilised neighbours from seemingly mysterious regions, and from a still more mysterious

life. The analysis of their name, or the questions of psychologists as to why man's mind invented them, after all leaves room for more poetic and more childlike musings about the bright tradition; and wherever they came from, but one thing is certain—that they belong in a peculiar manner to the poets and the small folk. These have appropriated Fairyland, for good reasons of their own, as we have seen; and in their possession the old tradition has yet to develop in the future, perhaps through inexhaustible phases of the fantastic and the beautiful.

And even when the poets, professionally so-called, have given up the fairies, and have ceased to wave magic wands over the land where fairies dwell, we feel sure the children—'your only true poets,' as Macaulay says—will remain faithful to the old beliefs; and little eyes will sparkle, and little faces brighten as of old, when the beneficent fairy-form is once more conjured up before them, to relieve some persecuted hero in his sore distress, or to spread protecting wings round some beautiful heroine whom bad sisters hate, and ugly witch-women seek to destroy. More than this, it would be wrong to deprive children of their fairy intimates, even had we the power to do so. It would indeed be an act of positive cruelty. It would be depriving many a sensitive, imaginative child of its chief source of comfort and pleasurable reflection amid the little cares, and tiny, but not less real vexations, of its child-life. The belief in the good spirits called Fairies is with children a kind of religion—often more sincere and pure-hearted than much of our grown-up religion is; and the consciousness that these bright-eyed, sylph-like creatures, with their snow-white drapery and their angel-wings, are ever hovering around in love and tender pity, brings hope and sweet comfort to the darker and sadder hours of many a little life, and opens out the child-heart in its time of trouble as the sunshine of morning opens out the daisies.

#### S H A D O W S.

A burst of golden sunshine,  
A whispering of the leaves,  
A music-ripple on the brook,  
A joy, a wonder in each nook;  
A sweeping shadow o'er the land,  
A flushing of the tree-tops,  
A crimsoning of the lake,  
A peaceful mildness in the air,  
A thought of hidden mysteries there,  
A glorious fading of the sun—  
A summer's day is done.

A joy in childhood's playthings,  
A casting them aside;  
A flash of golden youth-hood's hour,  
When joy breaks through the passing shower;  
A castle-building in the air;  
A cherished hope defeated;  
A smile, a joy, a doubt,  
A gleam, reflected from the past;  
A sigh upon its bosom cast;  
A mystery of a world unknown;  
And then—a soul has flown.

A. ARMSTRONG.

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